

Former Nurse Aide Pleads Guilty to Dependent Adult Abuse

TAMA, IOWA (March 7, 2005) – Robin Lynn Oaxaca, 41, of Tama recently pleaded guilty to three counts of Financial Exploitation of Dependent Adults, all Class D felonies, in Tama County District Court. Each count related to a different dependent adult residing at Grandview Acres, a Toledo nursing facility, where Oaxaca had worked as a certified nursing assistant in late 2001 and January 2002.

Oaxaca admitted to having taken checks from the rooms of the residents while she was employed by the facility as caretaker for the residents. Thereafter, she negotiated the checks at Tama County area businesses by engaging in deceptive acts, including forgery. The amount of money involved in Oaxaca's transactions totaled nearly \$2,400.

Oaxaca faces sentencing on April 21, 2005. A Class D felony is punishable by up to five years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$7,500. The prosecution resulted from an investigation conducted by the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals' (DIA) Health Facilities Division and Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, the Toledo Police Department, and the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI). An Assistant Iowa Attorney General prosecuted the case at the request of the Tama County Attorney.

DIA Director Steve Young, reflecting on the increase in dependent adult abuse complaints, said, "Iowa is experiencing the same trend seen nationally – an increase in reported dependent adult abuse. Maintaining vigilance to safeguard vulnerable citizens is imperative, accountability a necessity."